Statement of Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, and Sweden on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034

The negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034 have entered a decisive stage. Through the MFF, the EU determines how it will spend its common resources well into the next decade. In an increasingly uncertain world, the MFF provides the foundation for ensuring the EU's capacity to act as a strong and sovereign community, and to ensure security for Europeans. To deliver on this ambition, the MFF must be modernised and reformed, both in its architecture and in the way it allocates resources. Both should be guided by our shared priorities, which are set out, not least, in our Strategic Agenda: security and defence, competitiveness, migration and sovereignty. By endorsing the three core spending programmes, the Council has laid the foundation for an architecture that is fit for the challenges ahead.

Based on an affordable and viable EU budget, we jointly support the ambition to conclude the negotiations in 2026. At a time when virtually all Member States are undertaking painful fiscal consolidation, the EU budget cannot be an exception. The European Union must make clear choices and reprioritise within the budget, just as we do at home. The MFF will grow to address our strategic priorities, but it can only do so at a moderate pace. To arrive at an acceptable landing zone, the Commission’s proposal of nearly 2 trillion Euros needs to be reduced by several hundred billion Euros in a balanced manner. All headings should contribute to such reductions. Given the exceptionally high level of outstanding payment commitments under the current MFF, together with additional transfer mechanisms outside the MFF, a holistic assessment of the payment flows is necessary in the context of the MFF negotiations. Furthermore, we expect the EU institutions to organise their workload within the existing staff levels. Excessive net imbalances must be corrected.

To live up to our ambitions, the new MFF must be underpinned by an efficient, socially responsible and business-friendly legislative and regulatory framework that systematically prioritises the successful, swift and green transformation of our economies, in particular by accelerating planning and permitting procedures. Respect for our common values and the rule of law must be a fundamental condition for access to any European funding. New common borrowing is not the solution to our budgetary challenges and is no alternative to structural reforms.